097.3
2109z
no.2000
c.2

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

Research and Analysis Branch

RECEIVED
SEP 22 1944

R and A No. 2000

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REFERENCE DIVISION
FILE COPY
PLEASE RETURN
REF

THE BELGIAN POLICE AND GENDARMES

125698
FEA CONFIDENTIAL
CLASSIFIED DOCUMENT
ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE DIV.
DOCUMENT SECURITY SEC.

Description

This study contains information concerning the pre-war organization of the Belgian police, and their reorganization during the German Occupation. The problem of maintenance of order in liberated Belgium is also discussed.

22 August 1944

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, 50 USC 31 and 32, as amended. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

Copy No. 65

CONFIDENTIAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Map: Provinces of Belgium (No. 3258)	fii
Summary	iii
I. Pre-war Organization	1
A. General	1
B. Local Police	2
C. Gendarmes	4
D. Detective Department	6
II. Reorganization during the German Occupation	7
A. Introduction	7
B. Local Police	7
C. National Gendarmes	9
1. Introduction	9
2. Territorial Subdivisions	10
3. Mobile Units	10
4. Recruiting	11
5. Instruction	12
6. Liberation Attitude	12
D. Detective Department	14
E. New Police Formations	15
1. Food Controllers	15
2. Rural Guard	16
3. Factory Guards	16
4. Flemish Guard and Walloon Guard	17
5. Citizens' Guard	17
6. Political Militia	18
7. ARP	18
III. The Problem of Maintenance of Order in Liberated Belgium	18
A. General	18
B. Preparation by the Government in Exile for the Liberation Period	19
C. Local Police	21
D. Gendarmes	22
E. Detective Department	22
Chart: Belgian Pre-war Public Safety System	f22

Summary

1. Pre-war administration of the Belgian police was centered in the communes, whose police formations were the most important in the country. Police power was wielded by local officials, headed by the burgomasters. The only national or state police were the gendarmes. The Detective Department, whose jurisdiction extended over the whole country, was responsible to the public prosecutor.

2. Under German pressure after the invasion of 1940, a complete reorganization of the police system took place. Every effort was made to effect a greater centralization of control. The local police were put on a national basis, new personnel was brought in, and new police units were formed. The gendarmes, reorganized and strengthened in numbers, became the most important instrument of German control.

3. Many new police formations were created under German influence, including food control units to combat black market activities, rural guards to protect crops, machinery, and buildings, factory guards for the protection of industrial equipment, and several auxiliary police forces recruited from the ranks of ex-servicemen. Political militia was also set up to prevent outbreaks of disorder.

4. Although the Belgians are essentially a law-abiding people, reports from occupied Belgium indicate a decrease in respect for law and order.

5. It seems likely that the local police will be re-established in liberated Belgium on the pre-war basis under the control of the burgomasters. The gendarmes, however, were unpopular before the war and have cooperated with German police during the period of occupation. Therefore, the use of even the reliable personnel among the gendarmes may be expected to create difficulties.

THE BELGIAN POLICE AND GENDARMES

I. PRE-WAR ORGANIZATION

A. General

The prominence of the communes (Belgium's local government units) in the administrative framework was particularly pronounced in the police system. With the exception of two organizations the national gendarmes (Gendarmerie Nationale) and the Detective Department (Police Judiciaire) -- the Belgium police were under local administration and control.

The work of the police consisted of two main functions -- crime prevention and crime detection. The organizations devoted to crime prevention were under the Minister of the Interior, who was responsible for the maintenance of order and for the efficiency of the police in their preventive activities. However, administrative centralization in the communes left considerable power in the hands of the burgomasters and other local officials. The supreme control over detective functions was entrusted to the Minister of Justice.

Prior to the war Belgium had developed a police force which was free from political influence and, on the whole, very efficient. The police system consisted of three divisions:

1. Local Police (Police Communale)
2. National Gendarmes (Gendarmerie Nationale)
3. Detective Department (Police Judiciaire)

policemen, varied according to the population of the area. Usually there were three or four policemen per 5,000 inhabitants; they were appointed by the municipal council. In communes of more than 5,000 inhabitants, the burgomaster was assisted by a commissioner-in-chief of police appointed by the Minister of the Interior from a list submitted to him by the municipal council. The burgomaster, as chief of police, could delegate such power as he chose to the commissioner. Although the commissioners-in-chief were designated by law as heads of the police departments the burgomasters exercised all the more important powers, including those of appointment and dismissal.

Besides their administrative duties, the commissioners had several other important functions. The commissioners acted as public prosecutors in the police courts; in the higher criminal courts they assisted the District Attorneys to prepare cases on offenses committed within their districts. They sat as magistrates for preliminary hearings, holding for trial or discharging from custody the prisoners brought before them. In various ways, they assisted the Detective Department. The presence of police commissioners with legal and semi-judicial functions was the most characteristic feature of the police departments in Belgium. In large towns the commissioner-in-chief had a number of assistants or deputies.

For the purpose of police administration the communes were divided into divisions, each of which had a headquarters known as the commissariat. A division was headed by a superintendent who

B. Local Police (Police Communale)

The unit of organization of the local police was the commune or municipality. These police were under the exclusive control of the burgomaster of the commune, who was ex officio chief of police. The burgomaster was appointed by the King, but had to be chosen from the members of the municipal council. His term of office extended for six years.

The boards of aldermen and the municipal councils, which were the representative organs of the communes, had no power in connection with law enforcement. The burgomaster alone was charged with this function. The municipal council could pass ordinances, but it could not control their enforcement by the burgomaster. It was not even authorized to express its opinion on measures taken by the burgomaster to enforce ordinances adopted by the council itself. The burgomaster acted alone without having to consult his aldermen and was subject only to control by the superior provincial authorities or the Minister of Interior.

The burgomaster not only directed and commanded all officers and agents of the local police, but he could also, in case of necessity, requisition the assistance of the gendarmes and the army. Furthermore, as a measure of discipline, the burgomaster could temporarily suspend the officers and agents of the local police, even when, as in the case of the chiefs of police, the power of appointment and removal belonged to the King.

The local police were the most important of the nation's police formations. Their organization, as well as the number of

was under the direct control of the police commissioner, and who had a chief inspector as his deputy. The divisions were subdivided into sections (quartiers), headed by inspectors, who were assisted by clerks called special agents. The agents de police, popularly known as agents, performed patrol duties and controlled traffic points. In the larger cities small detective departments known as the police judiciaire were established. These departments were composed of one or two chief inspectors and a few selected officers. They dealt exclusively with serious crimes and misdemeanors and collaborated with the uniformed police.

In rural areas, police duties were performed by the rural police (gardes champêtres). A brigadier (sergeant) was in charge of a district composed of several villages. The sergeant was responsible to the Governor of the province. Appointments to the rural guard were made by the Governor of the province upon recommendation of the rural or district council. The Belgian forests were under the control of the forest guards (gardes forestiers).

C. Gendarmes (Gendarmerie Nationale)

The Belgian gendarmes were national or state police. As regards personnel, supplies, and discipline, they were placed under the Minister of National Defense, but in respect to the maintenance of order they were responsible to the Ministers of Interior and Justice.

The supreme command of the national gendarmes was vested

in a Lieutenant General. Prior to the war, the organization of the Belgian gendarmes comprised two mobile regiments and eight territorial groups. The two mobile regiments had headquarters in Brussels and Antwerp, and were divided into four mobile groups:

First mobile regiment: Headquarters at Brussels
First mobile group stationed at Brussels
Third mobile group stationed at Charleroi

Second mobile regiment: Headquarters Antwerp
Second mobile group stationed at Antwerp
Fourth mobile group stationed at Liége
(two companies of this group were stationed at Brussels)

The territorial groups had headquarters in Ghent, Antwerp, Liége, Namur, Bruges, Mons, Brussels, and Hasselt. Each of these groups was composed of two or three companies with a total of twenty-one companies. Each company was divided into four or five districts, which were under the command of a lieutenant. Districts in turn were subdivided into gendarmes posts, called brigades, which were established all over the country.

Together with the customs officials, the gendarmes guarded the frontier. They supplied police services for the correctional tribunals and for the assize courts, particularly in the guarding and the transport of prisoners. At times of national emergency the gendarmes enforced mobilization measures. In cases of strikes, riots, and public disturbances, they were placed at the disposal of the provincial Governors, the Commissaires d'arrondissement or the burgomasters. As a result of the nature of these activities as well as of the strictness with which they were carried out the gendarmes inspired fear and were unpopular. Since they were organized on a national rather than on a local level, the gendarmes, unlike the local police, often had little in common

with the population of the particular area in which they performed their duties. At the time of the invasion, the Belgian gendarmes had an authorized strength of 187 officers and 8,200 men.

D. Detective Department (Police Judiciaire)

The Police Judiciaire du Parquet, or Detective Department, was inaugurated in 1920. Branches of this department were attached to the offices of the public prosecutors in the chief towns of the country. Each branch was under the authority of an Officier Judiciaire Principal Dirigeant, responsible only to the public prosecutor. The branches were divided into sections specializing in different types of crimes.

In charge of each section was an Officier Judiciaire (detective inspector) who had under him one or more Agents Judiciaires Principaux (detective sergeants) and a squad of Agents Judiciaires (detectives).

In connection with the Detective Department, a School of Criminology and Scientific Police Research was established in Brussels, and a Laboratory of Scientific Police Research in each of the important towns.

Unlike the local police, whose jurisdiction did not extend beyond the limits of their respective communes, the Detective Department had jurisdiction over the whole country.

In addition to the Detective Department, the Control Office of Criminal Information (general registry) and the Central Journal of Information have been founded. Records of all criminals convicted in Belgium, together with those of foreign

criminals received from the police of other countries, were kept in Brussels. Detectives were appointed by the Minister of Justice, and the Inspectors were appointed by the King.

II. REORGANIZATIONS DURING THE GERMAN OCCUPATION

A. Introduction

Under the German occupation Belgium's police system has undergone a far-reaching reorganization. The changes have not been limited to a regrouping of the pre-war formations, but have also included the creation of new police groups. The centralization of control of the country's police system has been one of the most striking features of the German-inspired changes. The structure of the various Belgian police groups is closely connected with the administrative framework of the country. Therefore, a change in the powers of a minister or a burgomaster will ipso facto affect the authority of these officials over the police groups.

B. Local Police (Police Communale)

Through a series of decrees promulgated by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Interior, the entire local police system of the country has been reorganized. In the pre-war period, as a result of the prevailing spirit of decentralization, the local authorities alone were in charge of their own police forces. In March 1942, however, control of the local police was centralized under the Ministry of the Interior. Thus the communes, though "free to recruit their own police

forces," have been forced to do so from a list of candidates drawn up by the government in Brussels. These decrees have abolished the pre-war supreme rights of the burgomasters and have given full power over all the local police forces in the country to one single central official.

However, this drastic change in the supreme authority of the police did not change the spirit of the members of the police units. In order to replace the loyal elements of the former local policy by sympathizers with the New Order, the Secretary General introduced police schools, which new members as well as old officials under the age of 41 were obliged to attend. These institutions were located at Bruges, Antwerp, Hasselt, and Brussels. This training program has been taken over by the gendarmes.

The rural police, too, has undergone a number of reorganizations. The duties of the various ranks are now specified by decrees of the Ministry of the Interior. Appointment of members of the rural police are to proceed as before. The brigadiers are to be picked from among the gradés (police of the lowest rank) of the district, and are appointed by the Governor of the province upon the recommendation of the commissaire d'arrondissement. Chief brigadiers are appointed by the Governor himself. The reorganization of the rural police has made it necessary for the Department of the Interior to appoint nine inspectors, some thirty-five chief brigadiers, and an even greater number of ordinary rural brigadiers. The number of rural police

for each municipality has been laid down by a further decree. Their numbers have been determined on the following basis:

a. Exclusively rural municipalities of less than 5,000 inhabitants are entitled to appoint from one to three rural police, with the exception of municipalities of less than 1,000 inhabitants and covering an area of less than 1,000 hectares. Municipalities of this category are combined with others to obtain the services of one man;

b. In semi-rural municipalities of less than 5,000 inhabitants, the rural guards are appointed as in the case of the rural municipalities, but the number of ordinary policemen in the service of the municipalities is deducted;

c. Rural municipalities of over 5,000 inhabitants have an ordinary police force, but they are allowed to ask for a certain number of rural police, not to exceed three, with the consent of the Governor of the province.

C. National Gendarmes (Gendarmerie Nationale)

1. Introduction. As in the case of the local police, the National Gendarmes have been reorganized by Romsee, the Secretary General of the Interior, in order to centralize control under his own supreme authority. It should be noted, however, that a great number of the changes which have been instituted since the invasion had already been planned and generally accepted long before the war.

Under the occupation, the national gendarmes have been called to play far more important roles than in the pre-war

period. The German occupying authorities were of the opinion that it would prove to be less difficult to transform the gendarmes into a subservient tool than to reorganize the local police. After reorganizing the gendarmes, therefore, the Germans and the Belgian quislings entrusted to them an important part in the country's police work. The present importance of the gendarmes is therefore much greater than ever before.

2. Territorial Subdivisions. In November 1941 the gendarmes were divided into purely Flemish units for service in Flemish areas, called Corps de Gendarmerie du Nord de la Belgique (with centers at Brussels, Hasselt, Antwerp, Ghent, and Bruges), and French speaking units in the Walloon provinces, called Corps de Gendarmerie du Sud de la Belgique (centered in Liége, Arlon, Namur, and Mons). A bilingual unit has been formed for service in Brabant. Thus two territorial regiments have been created, a Flemish regiment with headquarters in Brussels, and a Walloon regiment with headquarters in Liége.

3. Mobile Units. Both of the two pre-war mobile regiments of two groups each have been maintained. The first regiment became the Flemish regiment, the second the Walloon regiment. Moreover, a fifth mobile group has been created, comprising four companies with headquarters in Ghent. The first mobile group has been transformed into a Flemish unit, and all its Walloon elements have been transferred to the territorial gendarmerie or the mobile units in the Walloon part of the country. The two companies of

the fourth mobile group stationed in Brussels have been returned to Liége. In addition the following new units have been created:

a. Two motorized companies (one Walloon and one Flemish) of three platoons each (a platoon consists usually of one officer and thirty men), with headquarters in Brussels. These units are under the immediate control of the Commandant of the Gendarmes. The companies are composed of 3 officers, 1 master sergeant (adjutant), 21 non-commissioned officers (gradés d'élite), and 107 gendarmes.

b. Nine partly motorized companies, known as "Escadron F," charged exclusively with the suppression of fraud. Each company is composed of three platoons consisting of 4 officers, 16 non-commissioned officers, and 82 men. One company is assigned to each of the nine provinces.

c. One BM company (bilingual) -- consisting of two platoons.

d. The ARCA (Atelier de Réparation du Charroi Automobile), a motor repair shop with headquarters in Brussels.

4. Recruiting. The system of recruiting new members for the gendarmes has also been changed. By the new regulations enacted in January 1942 all lists of candidates had to be submitted to the occupying authorities. Consequently the new gendarmes, particularly those in the Flemish part of the country, must be considered New Order sympathizers. Furthermore, in November 1941 a number of army officers were allowed to transfer to the

officers' cadre of the gendarmes. All these officers have signed a declaration that they will not take up arms against the Germans. The command of the gendarmes has been entrusted to Dr. van Coppenolle, a well-known collaborationist.

5. Instruction. The GRI (Groupe de Réserve et d'Instruction), a training and instruction group, which existed before the war, but had little influence, has been replaced by two centers of instruction, one at Antwerp for the Flemish recruits and one at Vottem (near Liége) for the Walloon recruits. After an instruction period of three to six months, the recruits are transferred to the "Escadron F" for a supplementary training period of about six months. The trainees are then transferred to the mobile group, where they must pass a new instruction period of four to five months before they can take the examination for non-commissioned rank.

There are two centers of instruction for second lieutenants, one in Antwerp for the Flemings and another in Terveuren for the Walloons, covering a two-year study program.

6. Liberation Attitude.[1] The territorial gendarmes are composed primarily of persons belonging to the pre-war ranks of the gendarmes, who may be found to be loyal to Belgian independence, except for those who joined the ranks since the invasion. The loyalty of the mobile units is said to be more doubtful. A great number of gendarmes joined the ranks of the Flemish groups after

1. Caution: Estimates of attitude are based on varying sources and reflect the views of those sources; available evidence does not permit independent judgments or findings.

the capitulation of the Belgian army; a number of their officers belonged to the regular army. The two Walloon mobile units, with the exception of the third group of the First Regiment, at Charleroi, are reportedly composed of old members. All of the other seven companies, except for some officers, are reported to merit confidence. The second motorized Walloon company is also considered reliable. The nine companies of "Escadron F", however, are composed to a great extent of new recruits.

In September 1943 Belgian intelligence services in London rated the reliability of the various units as follows:

Territorial gendarmes	Walloon	very high
	Flemish	high
Mobile units	Walloon	very high
	Flemish	high
"Escadron F"	Walloon	fair
	Flemish	low
Motorized company	Walloon	very good
	Flemish	low

It is said to be probable that the majority of the officers appointed before 25 May 1940 will be favorable to liberation.

On 10 January 1942 the authorized strength of the Belgian gendarmes was as follows:

	1942 requirement	Pre-war figure
Lieutenant General	1	1
General, Colonel, or Major	1	1
Colonels	3	3
Captains	85	66
Lieutenants (First and Second)	133	99
Other officers	30	18
Enlisted men	9,200	8,200

The composition of the gendarmes, with respect to old and new members, is indicated below as of 28 August 1942:

	Non-commissioned officers	Enlisted men
The pre-war gendarmes	1,937	5,095
Entered the gendarmes after 10 May 1940 (Flemings	66	1,464
(Walloons	2	596
TOTALS	2,005	7,155

Since August 1942, the staff has been reinforced until its table of organization calls for 10,200 men. It can be assumed that this increase of 1,000 men is composed exclusively of New-Order sympathizers.

D. Detective Department (Police Judiciaire)

Little information has been received on this police force since the occupation. It appears that few administrative changes have been made. It still remains under the

Procureurs généraux (public prosecutors). In May 1943, it was reported that the District Attorney in Liége was recruiting inspectors for a new service inside the Police judiciaire, which was called the Brigade politique. The duties of this new service were to consist of supervising the police themselves and in tracking down saboteurs and assassins.[7]

E. New Police Formations

Since the German occupation a great number of new police formations have been created. All these formations, which perform auxiliary police functions, are New Order institutions.

1. Food Controllers (Controleurs de Ravitaillement). This special service was set up by the Ministry of Agriculture and was organized in order to combat the black market. The same service supervised also the application of food-rationing regulations. The control of prices and salaries, however, was brought at that time under a separate service which acted under the Commissaire aux Prix et Salaires, who was a member of the Flemish Fascist Party (VNV). The controllers of the Ministry of Agriculture, on the other hand, have been recruited from among the ex-officers and NCO's of the Belgian army. By decree of 20 August 1941, however, both controlling services have been combined and attached to the Ministry of the Interior. A Director General, Woestijn, has been placed at the head of the new service. In March 1941 the number of controllers exceeded 6,000, the greater part of whom came from the control service of the Commissariat aux Prix et Salaires.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Each of the nine Belgian provinces has its own control service group, which in turn has been subdivided into districts corresponding to the arrondissements. The gendarmes, and especially the mobile brigade of the gendarmes, work in close cooperation with the controllers' service. The controllers do not wear uniforms.

2. Rural Guard (Garde Rurale -- Boerenwacht). The CNAA (Corporation Nationale de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation), the German-inspired agricultural organization, created in July 1941 the boerenwacht in Flanders and the garde rurale in Wallonia. This force was responsible for protecting agricultural property and crops against thefts and acts of sabotage. It has been placed under the orders of the CNAA, and has been locally controlled by the burgomasters. Voluntary enrollment has been used to obtain enlistments of one man per ten hectares. The rural guard has been formed mainly of agricultural workers who do not wear uniforms.

3. Factory Guards. Flemish and Walloon factory guards have also been established by the Belgian quislings. These formations have been placed under the orders of the German military authorities to assist the Feldgendarmerie. In the beginning of 1943, Elias, the leader of the VNV (Flemish fascist party) announced that the Flemish Factory Guard was to be directly subordinate to him and was to form an independent fighting formation called

the DM Watch Brigade (Diatsche-Militie Wacht Brigade). Turcksin, of the VNV, has been made chief and leader of the formation, and Bert Mevis has been named acting commander. The duties of the DM Watch Brigade have been described as twofold: (1) to help the Wehrmacht by watching important buildings and searching for saboteurs; (2) to undergo training as political soldiers for the defense of the country. A school has been established near Brussels. The members wear a black uniform with a distinctive arm band.

In September 1943, a special Canal Guard was formed in order to safeguard the passage of supplies along canals and waterways.

4. Flemish Guard (Vlaamsche wacht) and Walloon Guard (Garde Wallonia). Both formations are auxiliary police forces established by the Germans to help the Belgian and German gendarmes maintain public order. Both are composed of volunteers, particularly recruited from the ranks of the society of ex-servicemen. Training and discipline are on the German model.

The commandant of the Flemish guard is Naets, and the commandants of the Walloon guard are Major Torne and Commandant Malherbe. The officers and men wear the old uniforms of the Belgian army, dyed dark blue with yellow (Flemish) or red (Walloon) trimmings, and with a crown of oak leaves in sabres on the chest.

5. Citizens' Guard. In the Greater Brussels area, the burgomaster informed the population in February 1943 that, by order of

the German authorities, a citizens' guard would be formed for the purpose of strengthening the security of the city. This service was supposed to start its work on 15 March 1943, and was to function during the evening and at night. There is as yet no evidence that similar groups have been formed in other Belgian cities.

6. Political Militia. The political militia also performs police duties. Reeder's circular of September 1941 recognized three types of political militia: (a) the Zwarte Brigade (Black Brigade); (b) the Vlaamsche SS (Flemish SS); (c) Formation de Combat (Combat Formation).

7. ARP. The Belgian ARP service was reorganized in July 1943 into an ARP Commissariat General, with L. Dautrebande as chief. The reorganization included:

1. The creation of a central body on which local services can draw in the event of a raid or whenever additional assistance is needed.

2. The organization of regional and local services under the Secretary General.

III. THE PROBLEM OF MAINTENANCE OF ORDER IN LIBERATED BELGIUM

A. General

Before the war, the Belgians were known as a law-abiding people. The maintenance of order did not constitute a major problem. It is, however, difficult to foresee to what extent

this picture of public order has been affected by several years of enemy occupation, and it is impossible to predict whether or not the influence of Allied military operations will alter the situation. Reports from occupied Belgium reflect an alarming increase in juvenile delinquency and a decline in respect for the law. However, there is no basis for concluding that great disturbances of public order are necessarily to be expected in Belgium immediately after the country's liberation. The problem of maintenance of order will be influenced by internal as well as foreign political developments. Among the internal problems which might conceivably give rise to disorders is the monarchical question. In addition, if riots or outbreaks of violence should occur in France they would undoubtedly be reflected in Belgium.

B. Preparations by the Government in Exile for the Liberation Period

The Belgian government in exile, in negotiations with the British and American Civil Affairs authorities, has worked out detailed plans for the administration of Belgium immediately after the liberation. The Belgian Civil Affairs administrators, who will work under the joint civil affairs authorities, have already appointed the heads of the various departments. In the field of maintenance of public order, highest authority has been vested in an Auditeur Général (Judge Advocate General) who becomes, according to Belgian law, the most important of

the country's prosecuting officials. In addition, he will be the High Commissioner for the Security of the Realm, and it will be his duty to give advice to those who are responsible for the maintenance of order. As Auditeur Général, he will direct the police officials. On his staff will be Auditeurs Militaires (Judge Advocates) and Substituts Auditeurs Militaires, who will have the direction of the Police Judiciaire, of the communal police, and of the gendarmes. Moreover, the Belgian authorities have decided that on their return to the liberated country, the municipal councils, boards of aldermen, and burgomasters in office before 16 May 1940 will be reinstated as far as possible. All subsequent resignations and appointments will be disregarded. Municipal officers on lower levels, including the Commissaires de Police (police commissioners) and their forces, are to be restored to their positions as of 16 May 1940, with the same duties and ranks. Quislings, however, are to be immediately expelled from official posts, and only those who have not compromised themselves will resume their pre-war posts. The general plan thus provides that all changes in the Belgian police system made during German occupation will be abrogated, and that the new units of police will be abolished.

The question of resumption of office by those who had been dismissed under the occupation may prove to be complicated.

A great number of these officials have been deported for work in the Reich and will not be available immediately after the country's liberation. Moreover, the destruction of records and files by the quislings would render the identification of quislings difficult. Special attention will have to be given to the members of the newly created police organizations, who have been given arms, although they are not in uniform.

C. Local Police (Police Communale)

After the dismissal of disloyal elements, the local police will prove to be the most important police force in Belgium. The problem of acute manpower shortage might be remedied partly by the creation of a Police bourgeoise or National Guard. Members of the 1940 Belgian armed forces could also be recruited as auxiliary police officers.

The immediate restitution of the supreme authority of the burgomaster over the communal police would increase the people's confidence in their police units and at the same time facilitate enforcement of laws on the local level. However, a complete return to the pre-war system will involve the dissolution of the agglomeration of smaller communes created since 1940.

It is possible that the Belgian government will reconstitute these larger areas, after rescinding the German-inspired decree by which they were first created. Thus the police organization of these smaller areas will fall under the juris-

diction of the burgomasters of the greater municipalities.

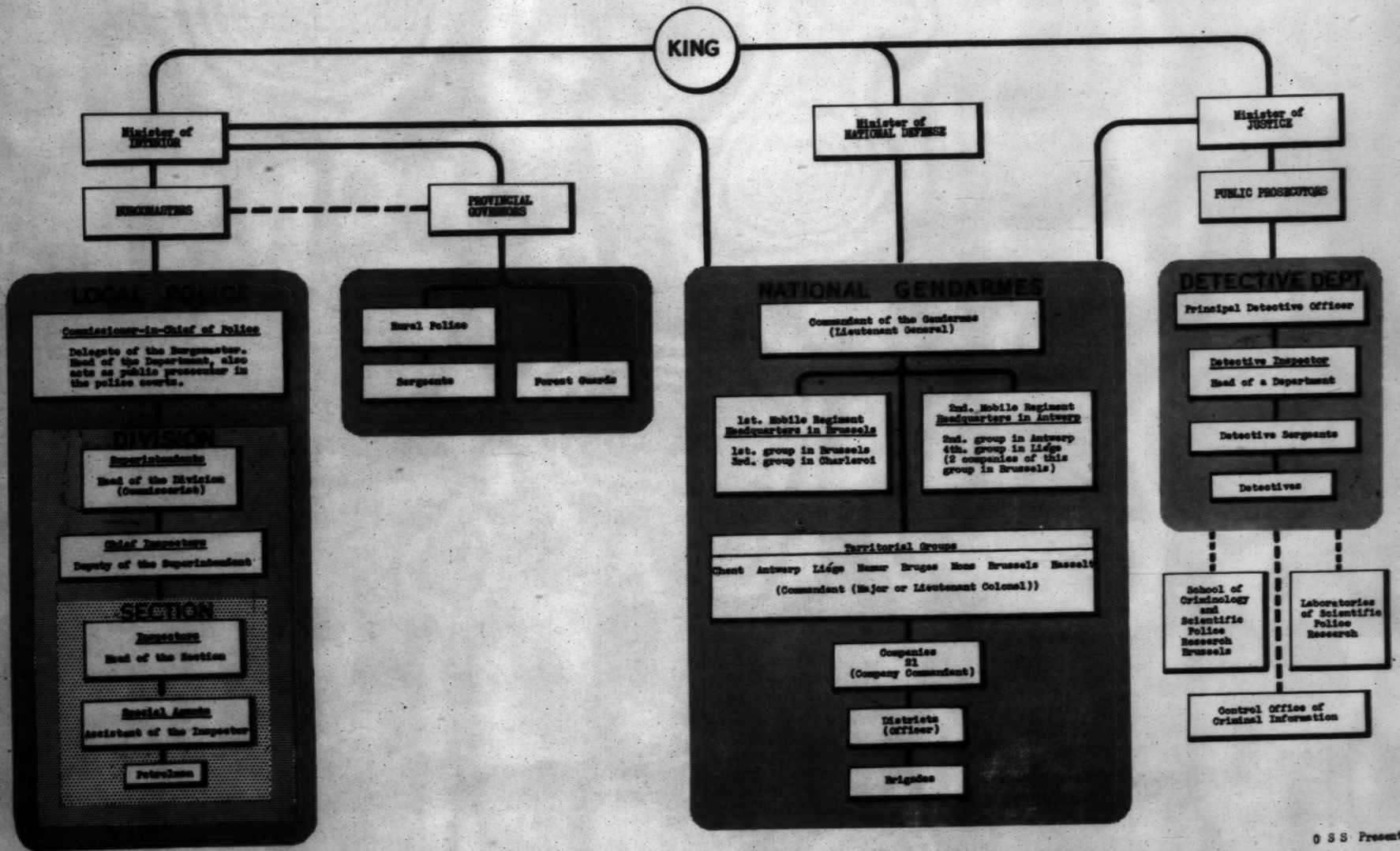
D. Gendarmes (Gendarmerie Nationale)

Public sentiment and attitude toward the gendarmes might have to be taken into consideration. As stated previously, the gendarmes were unpopular before the war. During the occupation, the Belgians have seen the members of this force cooperate with German police units in rounding-up Belgian patriots. This fact has probably caused a marked increase in public resentment. Therefore, the use of even the reliable or of purged units of the gendarmes might create some difficulties in liberated Belgium.

E. Detective Department (Police Judiciaire)

Since only a few administrative changes have taken place in this unit, the problem of their resumption of operation in liberated Belgium will not create any important difficulties.

BELGIAN PRE-WAR PUBLIC SAFETY SYSTEM



O S S Presentation